supporting one surface of said object on a plurality of support members;

loading said object supported by said plurality of support members onto a support surface of said stage, wherein the stage is movable two-dimensionally, and the stage has a hole portion in which the support surface is formed, the exposure beam passing through the hole portion; and

withdrawing said plurality of support members from said hole portion to an other surface side of said object after loading said object onto the support surface of said stage.

15. (Amended) The method according to claim 14, wherein said object includes a frame member, a predetermined circuit pattern being formed on said object, said frame member being securely fixed on said object, and said openings being formed in said frame member.

25. (Twice Amended) The apparatus according to claim 20, wherein said first object includes a frame member, a predetermined circuit pattern being formed on said first object, said frame member being securely fixed on said first object, and said openings being formed in said frame member.

29. (Twice Amended) An exposure apparatus for transcribing a pattern formed on a first object onto a second object by exposing the second object to an exposure beam from the first object with an optical system, comprising:

a stage which mounts said first object on a mounting surface, wherein the stage has a hole portion in which the mounting surface is formed, and the stage is movable in a two-dimensional plane, the exposure beam passing through the hole portion; and

a transfer system which transports said first object to/from said stage, said transfer system including:

a plurality of support members which supports said first object; and

a first driving mechanism which moves said plurality of support members in a first direction perpendicular to the two-dimensional plane between a first position and a second position, wherein the ends of the plurality of support members are positioned in the hole portion of the stage when said plurality of support members are moved to said second position by the first driving mechanism.

36. (Twice Amended) A method of manufacturing an exposure apparatus for transcribing a pattern formed on a first object onto a second object by exposing the second object to an exposure beam from the first object with an optical system, comprising:

providing a first stage which mounts said first object on a mounting surface, wherein the first stage has a hole portion in which the mounting surface is formed, and the stage is movable in a two-dimensional plane, the exposure beam passing through the hole portion;

providing a transfer apparatus which transports said first object to/from said first stage, said transfer apparatus including:

a plurality of support members which supports said first object; and

a first driving mechanism which moves said plurality of support members in a first direction perpendicular to the two-dimensional plane between a first position and a second position, wherein the ends of the plurality of support members are positioned in the hole portion of the stage when said plurality of support members are moved to said second position by the first driving mechanism;

providing said optical system; and

providing a second stage which mounts said second object.

39. (Amended) An exposure apparatus for transcribing a pattern formed on a first object onto a second object by exposing the second object to an exposure beam from the first object with an optical system, comprising: